

OPINION 1672

Muraena Linnaeus, 1758 and *Anguilla* Schrank, 1798 (Osteichthyes, Anguilliformes): placed on the Official List of Generic Names

Ruling

(1) The following names are hereby placed on the Official List of Generic Names in Zoology:

- (a) *Muraena* Linnaeus, 1758 (gender: feminine), type species by subsequent designation by Bory de Saint-Vincent (1827) *Muraena helena* Linnaeus, 1758;
- (b) *Anguilla* Schrank, 1798 (gender: feminine), type species by monotypy *Muraena anguilla* Linnaeus, 1758.

(2) The following names are hereby placed on the Official List of Specific Names in Zoology:

- (a) *helena* Linnaeus, 1758, as published in the binomen *Muraena helena* (specific name of the type species of *Muraena* Linnaeus, 1758);
- (b) *anguilla* Linnaeus, 1758, as published in the binomen *Muraena anguilla* (specific name of the type species of *Anguilla* Schrank, 1798).

History of Case 1173

An application for the confirmation of *Muraena helena* Linnaeus, 1758 as the type species of *Muraena* was received from Miss Ruth A. Cooper (*Secretariat, International Commission on Zoological Nomenclature*) and Mr Oliver A. Crimmen (*The Natural History Museum, London, U.K.*) on 21 September 1989. After correspondence the case was published in BZN 46: 259–261 (December 1989). Notice of the case was sent to appropriate journals.

The generic name *Muraena*, consistently used for moray eels, was placed on the Official List of Generic Names in Opinion 77 (January 1922) with the universally accepted type species *M. helena* Linnaeus, 1758. However, in 1958 *Muraena* was withdrawn from the List for further investigation: the earliest designation of a type species was believed to be that by Bleeker (1865) of *M. anguilla* Linnaeus, 1758. *M. anguilla* is the type species by monotypy of *Anguilla* Schrank, 1798, the common river eel, and strict adherence to the Règles [Code] would have resulted in the transfer of the name *Muraena* from the moray to the common eel and the loss of the name *Anguilla* as a junior objective synonym.

The application by Cooper & Crimmen (BZN 47: 259–261) sought to set aside Bleeker's (1865) designation of *anguilla* as the type of *Muraena* and accept that by Jordan & Gilbert (1882) of *helena*, thereby conserving both generic names, *Muraena* and *Anguilla*, in their accustomed usages.

A comment from Mr Alwyne Wheeler (*Epping Forest Conservation Centre, Loughton, Essex, U.K.*), published in BZN 47: 138 (June 1990), noted that the name *Anguilla* dated from Schrank (1798), and not Shaw (1803) as cited in the application. Comments from Dr F.C. Thompson (*United States Department of Agriculture, Washington D.C., U.S.A.*) and from one of the authors of the application (Ruth Cooper), published in BZN 47: 139, pointed out that Commission action was not required to conserve the name *Muraena* in its accustomed sense: the designation by

Bory de Saint-Vincent (1827) of *helena* as the type species predated that by Bleeker (1865) and *helena* is thus the valid type species of the genus.

The Commission was asked to agree to place both *Muraena* Linnaeus, 1758 and *Anguilla* Schrank, 1798 on the Official List, with *Muraena helena* and *M. anguilla*, both of Linnaeus, 1758, the respective type species.

Decision of the Commission

On 1 September 1991 the members of the Commission were invited to vote. At the close of the voting period on 1 December 1991 the votes were as follows:

Affirmative votes — 26: Bayer, Bock, Cocks, Corliss, Dupuis, Hahn, Halvorsen, Heppell, Holthuis, Kabata, Kraus, Lehtinen, Macpherson, Mahnert, Martins de Souza, Minelli, Nielsen, Nye, Ride, Savage, Schuster, Starobogatov, Thompson, Trjapitzin, Uéno, Willink

Negative votes — none.

No vote was received from Cogger.

Original references

The following are the original references to the names placed on Official Lists by the ruling given in the present Opinion:

Anguilla Schrank, 1798, *Fauna Boica*, vol. 1, part 2, p. 304.

anguilla, *Muraena*, Linnaeus, 1758, *Systema Naturae*, Ed. 10, vol. 1, p. 245.

helena, *Muraena*, Linnaeus, 1758, *Systema Naturae*, Ed. 10, vol. 1, p. 244.

Muraena Linnaeus, 1758, *Systema Naturae*, Ed. 10, vol. 1, p. 244.

The following is the reference for the designation of *Muraena helena* Linnaeus, 1758 as the type species of the nominal genus *Muraena* Linnaeus, 1758:

Bory de Saint-Vincent, J.B.G.M. 1827, in Audouin, [J.V.] *et al.* (Eds.), *Dictionnaire classique d'Histoire naturelle*, vol. 11, p. 305.